

REMARKS

Claims 1-3, 9-17, 24-29 and 32 are pending and stand ready for action on the merits. Claims 12, 14, 17, 27 and 28 have been withdrawn from consideration as being drawn to non-elected subject matter.

Issues Under 35 U.S.C. 103

Claims 1-3, 9-11, 13, 15, 16, 18, 24-26 and 29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ramaswamy et al. in view of Yoshida. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Applicants maintain that the present invention is not made obvious by Ramaswamy et al; however, in order to advance prosecution, Applicants submit that the present invention antedates the date Ramaswamy et al is available as prior art. The present application is a divisional of Application No. 08/696,993, filed on August 21, 1996, and Application No. 08/696,993 is the national phase of PCT International Application No. PCT/JP95/02622 filed on December 21, 1995. Since Ramaswamy et al has a priority date of February 23, 1996, the instant invention antedates the date Ramaswamy et al is available as prior art.

The present application is essentially a direct translation of PCT/JP95/02622.

Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection is rendered moot.

PTO-892 Form

Applicants note that the Examiner has cited certain references without clarifying why the references have been cited (background art?). Specifically, the Examiner has not indicated why the references A, B, F and G on the PTO-892 Form enclosed with the August 5, 2002 Office Action nor why the references on the PTO-892 Form enclosed with the outstanding Office Action (dated June 30, 2003), were cited. Applicants request clarification in the next communication.

Priority Documents

The Examiner has not acknowledged whether the instant Priority Documents have been received. Applicants respectfully request clarification in the next communication.

Conclusion

In view of the above comments, Applicants respectfully submit that the claims are in condition for allowance. A notice to such effect is earnestly solicited.

Pursuant to the provisions of 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.17 and 1.136(a), the Applicants hereby petition for an extension of two (2) months to

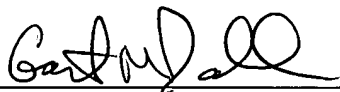
November 30, 2003 in which to file a reply to the Office Action.
The required fee of \$420.00 is enclosed herewith.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Garth M. Dahlen, Ph.D., Esq. (Reg. No. 43,575) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

By  #43575
Raymond C. Stewart, #21,066 for

RCS/GMD/gh
0425-0846P

P.O. Box 747
Falls Church, VA 22040-0747
(703) 205-8000